

Legislative Testimony
Public Health Committee
SB 993 AAC Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary
Friday, March 15th, 2013
Dr. Al Natelli

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Dr. Al Natelli. I have been practicing dentistry in Southington for nearly 20 years. In addition, for the record let me say that I am also a part time volunteer instructor of dentistry at the University Of Connecticut School Of Dental Medicine, an advisory member to the Lincoln College Dental Assisting program, a Town Councilor in the Town of Southington, "The City of Progress" as well as other just to name a few. I have also been involved in treating patients at the CT-MOM event over the years and I have even had my wife join us one year as she is a RN and help medically screen patients at the event. Also, I work closely with our social Services Department here in Southington in treating local community members, either pro-bono, reduced fees or by accepting Medicaid. I am here to testify in favor of Senate Bill 993 An Act Concerning Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries. Finally, please permit me to note that my testimony here reflects my individual opinion and not the opinion or position of any entity

It is no secret that I have supported in the past legislating the use of EFDA's here in CT and I continue to support this today. Here are just a few of the reasons I support this: 1) The Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary is a model which exists in forty four states, the District of Columbia, the Public Health Service, Indian Health Service, and the U.S. military. The use of EFDAs has been shown to improve efficiencies in the delivery of dental care, while maintaining the quality of that care. I received my dental training from the Case Western Reserve University School of Dentistry and was introduced to this concept of delivery of care over 20 years ago. It has a proven track record of success. 2) It is a cost effective way to train people and to deliver the care needed. The educational process for EFDAs is cost effective and individualized, to provide the efficiencies necessary for various practice settings. EFDAs are limited to providing only reversible clinical procedures under the supervision of a dentist, such as making and cementing temporary crowns, placing and carving fillings after the dentist has prepared the tooth and applying fluoride varnish to teeth. 3) The newly trained EFDA auxiliary will find new career choices never before offered, thus stimulating interest in this field. This is good for personal growth and development within the profession. It even can provide a hygienist the opportunity to receive a new skill set if so desired. 4) It does not look like this will cost additional monies to the state to get this implemented. As a Town Councilor I like this.

To those who say the EFDA will be doing hygiene procedure, nowhere in the bill does it allow for coronal polishing as referenced by hygiene association. The scope of hygiene remains untouched in this model. Thus the rumors circulation around this bill is unfounded. The fact is this bill will not impinge on the function of a hygienist i.e. cleaning and polishing teeth. The bill specifically prohibits assistants from performing procedures such as cleanings, which will remain within the scope of hygiene. In fact, the bill includes the very provisions that were previously accepted by the hygienists. It expands opportunities to add to their skill set thereby adding more career options.

In closing I think this bill is a win/win for all; our great state, the dentists as leaders of the dental team, dental assistants allowing them to be a great assistance to delivery of dental health care and the hygienist who now has a new path to do more in the office as well. In the past a bill like this had unnecessary attachments to it or amendments which disappointed me. As a dentist I can fully support this bill and as a profession you can see we are at the forefront of this bill. I would like to sincerely thank-you for your time and I am hopeful that you will support Senate Bill 993 unencumbered or amended.

Respectfully Submitted,

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